

Testimony of Gregory B. Allard, Vice President
American Ambulance Service, Inc. &
Association of Connecticut Ambulance Providers

Insurance and Real Estate Committee

Thursday, February 10, 2011

Senator Crisco and Representative Megna and other distinguished committee members.

My name is Greg Allard and I am the Vice President of both American Ambulance Service, Inc which is located in Norwich, CT and of the Association of Connecticut Ambulance Providers.

My testimony today is in opposition of Raised Bill No. 878, ***An Act Exempting from Regulation Certain Nonprofit Volunteer Ambulance Services or Companies.*** You heard testimony from David Lowell our Association President on this topic as well.

This issue was raised last year in HB 5305. Our Association communicated our concerns with this bill last year as well. This was done through testimony and direct communication with legislators from Eastern CT where this issue originates from.

It is the position of the Association that the introduction of a "subscription" program in our state is not warranted. This "subscription" has the potential to disrupt current billing practices which is already difficult at best to navigate. David Lowell also testified that nearly 85 % of the volunteer certified ambulance services in CT charge for their services. This means that these certified services bill the Medicare and Medicaid programs as well as commercial insurers for both primary and secondary insurance reimbursement. Medicare's, the largest payer for most all services, position on "subscription" is very strict so why would anyone want to challenge Medicare. Another concern is, how to identify a "subscription" patient from one that wasn't.

Quite honestly, the Nonprofit Volunteer Ambulance Service or Company that we once knew is a rare commodity because there is that "charge" component to their service. The service can make a business decision to write-off a patient's bill just as easy as any for-profit organization.

I am aware that there is a common practice amongst volunteer services. If a service provides care to a resident in their town the service will recoup what they can from patient's insurance. If the patient is uninsured they don't pursue the patient at all. These are business decisions that are made by their governing board or body. I think the group seeking out "subscription" status should consider this option.

It is for the reasons I mention above that I urge the committee to not support this bill as we believe it will disrupt Emergency Medical Services system in our state.

I would welcome anyone that feels compelled to ask more questions of me to please contact me at 860.886.1463.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory B. Allard
Vice President